

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 MCT-01 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /090 W
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R 141520Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4448
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 0320

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, FR, IS
SUBJECT: FRANCO-ISRAELI RELATIONS AFTER ABOU DAOUD'S RELEASE

SUMMARY: ISRAEL IS STILL CONSIDERING WHAT IF ANY FURTHER
STEPS IT SHOULD TAKE TO EXPRESS OFFICIAL DISAPPROVAL AT
THE FRENCH ACTION IN RELEASING ABOU DAOUD. A SENIOR
OFFICIAL "GUESSES" THAT FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRINGAUD
WILL BE ASKED TO "POSTPONE" HIS PLANNED VISIT HERE NEXT
MONTH, AND THAT VISITS OF SEVERAL OTHER FRENCH CABINET
MEMBERS MAY ALSO BE DELAYED. NO DECISION HAS YET BEEN
REACHED AS TO WHEN THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR WILL RETURN TO
PARIS AND THERE IS NO INTENTION TO ASK FOR THE RECALL OF
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THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN TEL AVIV. NO PURPOSE IS SEEN
IN EXACERBATING THE SITUATION, BUT IT IS CONCEDED THAT
ORGANIZATIONS WHICH ARE BEYOND GOI CONTROL MAY TAKE
MEASURES OF THEIR OWN. END SUMMARY.

1. BOTH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS AND THE FRENCH
AMBASSADOR HAVE CONFIRMED TO US THEIR INTENTION OF TRYING TO

MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE DISPUTE OVER THE ABOU DAOUD CASE DOES NO LASTING HARM TO FRANCO-ISRAELI RELATIONS. IT IS, OF COURSE, AN ISSUE WHICH IS LOADED WITH EMOTIONAL CONTENT HERE, AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE BITTER OFFICIAL AND OTHER COMMENTS AND THE DEMONSTRATIONS BY THE RELATIVES OF THOSE KILLED AT THE MUNICH OLYMPICS.

2. IN A CONVERSATION JANUARY 13 FRENCH AMBASSADOR HERLY TOLD THE CHARGE' THAT HIS SUMMONS TO SEE MFA ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL EVRON JANUARY 12 DID NOT RESULT IN A STORMY MEETING OR BITTER WORDS. (EVRON HAD SEEN HERLY, IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED, BECAUSE FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON HIMSELF DID NOT WISH TO MEET WITH THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR, AS A FORM OF EXPRESSING HIS INDIGNATION). HERLY SAID THAT EVRON HAD COMPLAINED THAT AS OF THE TIME OF THEIR MEETING THERE HAD BEEN NO OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION FROM THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO THE GOI ABOUT THE RELEASE OF DAOUD. EVRON HAD ASKED FOR THE TEXT OF THE COURT DECISION (WHICH HAS NOW BEEN RECEIVED AND IS UNDER STUDY). HE DID NOT LINK HIS COMPLAINT SPECIFICALLY TO OTHER RECENT FRENCH ACTIONS WHICH HAVE IRRITATED THE ISRAELIS, SUCH AS THE SALE OF MIRAGES TO EGYPT, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT THE ISRAELIS REGRETTED TO NOTE THAT IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS FRENCH POSITIONS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN ALMOST UNIFORMLY UNFAVORABLE TO ISRAEL. HERLY SAID HE HAD GONE OVER THE FRENCH LEGAL ARGUMENTS WITH EVRON, WHO HAD LISTENED BUT NOT ACCEPTED THEM.

3. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR SHOWED THE CHARGE' A COPY OF HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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LENGTHY INSTRUCTIONS FROM PARIS. AMONG OTHER THINGS THESE INSTRUCTIONS NOTED THAT A PERSON WITH THE NAME OF YOUSIF HANNA RAJI HAD PRESENTED HIMSELF FOR A VISA AT THE FRENCH CONSULAR OFFICE IN BEIRUT ON JANUARY 5. ALTHOUGH HE WAS A PALESTINIAN THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT HE WAS TRAVELING UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME AND THE VISA WAS ISSUED TO HIM WITHOUT, AS THE MESSAGE CLAIMED, THE CHECKS WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN IF HE HAD BEEN KNOWN TO HAVE AN ALIAS OR TO BE A TERRORIST. THE FRENCH HAVE PROTESTED THIS DECEIT TO THE PLO, HERLY ADDED. ON THE LEGAL SIDE, HE EMPHASIZED THAT FRANCE'S EXTRADITION AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL IS A "CONVENTION" NOT A "TREATY" AND THEREFORE DOES NOT OVER-RIDE NATIONAL FRENCH LAW. HE INDICATED (AND EVRON CONFIRMED) THE ISRAELIS WERE PARTICULARLY UPSET THAT THEY (LIKE THE GERMANS) HAD NOT BEEN NOTIFIED THAT THE HEARING OF THE COURT OF APPEALS WAS TAKING PLACE. HERLY SUMMED UP STOICALLY THAT APPARENTLY PARIS WANTED TO CONTINUE ITS BALANCING ACT BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAELIS (ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT EXPLAIN WHAT WAS BALANCED ABOUT THE DAOUD

AFFAIR).

4. IN A CONVERSATION JANUARY 14 EVRON SAID THAT THE GOI WAS STILL CONSIDERING WHAT STEPS IT SHOULD TAKE, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO SEVERAL VISITS WHICH HAD BEEN PLANNED AND THE RETURN OF AMBASSADOR GAZIT TO PARIS. HE SAID THAT LAST WEEK HERLY HAD APPROACHED THE MINISTRY WITH AN URGENT REQUEST THAT FOREIGN MINISTER DE GUIRGINAUD BE RECEIVED ON A VISIT BEGINNING FEBRUARY 27. EVRON SAID THE MFA WAS A LITTLE SURPRISED AT THE URGENCY WITH WHICH HERLY PRESSED THIS MATTER. THEY THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS DE GUIRGINAUD WAS TRYING TO GET IN AHEAD OF FRG FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER, WHO IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE HERE IN MARCH AFTER VISITING ARAB CAPITALS. THE FRENCH MIGHT NOT WANT TO LEAVE THE INITIATIVE ENTIRELY TO THE GERMANS AND THIS COULD BE ONE WAY OF STEALING GENSCHER'S THUNDER WHILE ALSO MAINTAINING SOME FORM OF FRENCH CREDIBILITY (AND CONFIDENTIAL

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STAKE) IN THE PEACE PROCESS. IN THE EVENT, THE GOI HAD NOT RESPONDED TO THIS REQUEST BY THE TIME OF THE DAOUD AFFAIR. EVRON SAID THAT IN HIS VIEW THE GOI PROBABLY WOULD HAVE AGREED TO THE DE GUIRGINAUD VISIT AS REQUESTED ALTHOUGH STILL UNHAPPY WITH HIS RECENT REMARKS IN REGARD TO THE PLO, INCLUDING THE FACT THAT HE HAD TRIED TO ASSOCIATE THE U.S. WITH HIS POSITION. WHILE NO DECISION HAS YET BEEN TAKEN, EVRON STRESSED THERE IS NOW A TENDENCY TO SUGGEST THAT DE GUIRGINAUD POSTPONE HIS VISIT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 0320

ASKED IF THIS MEANT UNTIL AFTER THE GENSCHER VISIT, HE REPLIED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE, "IF AT ALL." A NUMBER OF OTHER PENDING VISITS BY FRENCH CABINET MEMBERS (MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MINISTER OF CULTURE, AND POSSIBLY MINISTER OF LABOR) WOULD PROBABLY BE PUT OFF, IF NOT SCRUBBED. THERE WAS NO INTENTION OF ASKING FOR THE RECALL OF AMBASSADOR HERLY, A POINT WHICH ALLON MADE JANUARY 13 IN A MEETING WITH THE RELATIVES OF THE MUNICH VICTIMS. (HERLY SAID THAT, AS FAR AS HE KNEW, PARIS WOULD NOT RECALL HIM; THIS WOULD ONLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE). EVRON CONCLUDED THAT THE DAOUD CASE HAD TURNED OUT TO BE "MORE SERIOUS" FOR THE FRENCH THAN THEY EXPECTED IT TO BE, NOTING ADVERSE COMMENT IN THE FRENCH PRESS. HE ALSO TOOK COMFORT

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IN THE FACT THAT DESPITE AN APPARENT FRENCH OFFICIAL TILT TOWARD THE ARABS, PUBLIC OPINION POLLS IN FRANCE SHOWED THE ISRAELIS WERE STILL THREE TIMES AS POPULAR AS THE ARABS.

5. ON THE NON-OFFICIAL LEVEL, FEELINGS HAVE BEEN RUNNING HIGH. WE HAVE SEEN THIS REFLECTED IN THE PRESS AND IN COMMENTS FROM THE MAN-IN-THE-STREET, FROM POLITICIANS AND SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS: THERE IS SCORN AT THE FRENCH CAPITULATION. IN ADDITION, THERE HAVE BEEN HINTS, AND NOT MUCH MORE THAN HINTS YET, THAT OTHER NON-OFFICIAL ACTIONS MAY BE CONTEMPLATED. AN EXAMPLE IS THE FACT THAT THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ZIONIST ORGANIZATION, WHICH HAS JUST COMPLETED ITS WORLD CONFERENCE IN JERUSALEM, HAS DECIDED TO CANCEL A SCHEDULED TRIP TO FRANCE. A REPORTER WRITING IN DAVAR (CONTROLLED BY THE POWERFUL HISTADRUT) JANUARY 14 SAID: "PERHAPS A GENUINE PROTEST OUGHT TO BE EXPRESSED IN OTHER WAYS...DEMONSTRATIONS OUTSIDE FRENCH EMBASSIES IN ISRAEL AND OTHER COUNTRIES, AND OUTSIDE THE CULTURAL CENTERS, BOYCOTTING DIPLOMATIC AND CULTURAL EVENTS ORGANIZED BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT OR

ON ITS BEHALF EVERYWHERE - AND PERHAPS EVEN AN UNOFFICIAL ECONOMIC BOYCOTT OF FRENCH OFFICIAL BODIES SUCH AS AIR FRANCE. INTERNATIONAL JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS, TOO, HAVE 'NON-ESTABLISHMENT' WAYS AND MEANS OF OPERATING IN THIS CASE - IT HAS BEEN DONE IN THE PAST, AGAINST UNESCO AND OTHERS.." (THE "AND OTHERS" REFERS MOST PROBABLY TO THE MEXICO OF ECHEVERRIA WHOSE TOURIST INDUSTRY FELT THE WRATH OF THE WORLDWIDE JEWISH COMMUNITY AS A RESULT OF A UN VOTE CONSIDERED UNFRIENDLY TO ISRAEL). ANOTHER EXAMPLE IS A SUGGESTION IN THE JANUARY 13 YEDIOT, ISRAEL'S LARGEST-SELLING TABLOID, THAT FRENCH JEWS SHOULD BE ADVISED NOT TO VOTE FOR THE RULING PARTY. THIS TIES IN WITH A REPORT IN THE RESPECTED HAARETZ OF JANUARY 13 THAT "DIPLOMATIC SOURCES" IN JERUSALEM EXPLAINED THAT SO MANY SENIOR FRENCH POLITICIANS WERE SCHEDULED TO VISIT ISRAEL IN THE NEXT FEW

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WEEKS BECAUSE OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN FRANCE IN MARCH, WHICH HAVE MORE THAN USUAL IMPORTANCE. "THIS BEING SO, MUCH IMPORTANCE IS NOW ATTACHED TO THE JEWISH VOTE IN FRANCE." THIS IS THE ALLEGED REASON, HAARETZ MAINTAINS, FOR THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO HAVE HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS VISIT ISRAEL, ESPECIALLY SINCE FRENCH OPPOSITION LEADER MITTERAND IS CONSIDERING ACCEPTANCE OF AN INVITATION TO ATTEND THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION HERE NEXT MONTH.

6. DESPITE THE ABOVE, IT MAY BE THAT THE GOI WILL WISH TO USE THE ABOU DAOUD INCIDENT WITH REVERSE ENGLISH AS A POSSIBLE LEVER FOR IMPROVING ITS RELATIONS WITH FRANCE. ONE RESTRAINT ON ISRAEL WILL BE ITS DESIRE FOR CLOSER TRADE AND FINANCIAL RELATIONS WITH THE COMMON MARKET; ANOTHER, ITS NEED FOR MILITARY SPARE PARTS WHICH FRANCE HAS BEEN SUPPLYING. FURTHER, THERE IS SAID TO BE MUCH INTEREST IN LEARNING WHETHER FRANCE INTENDS NOW TO CHANGE WHAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE SEEN AS ITS DISTINCTLY PRO-ARAB POLICY, AND HOW SUCH A CHANGE MIGHT BE EXPRESSED. WHILE THIS IS STILL IN THE REALM OF SPECULATION, IT COULD BE THE HAPPIEST POSSIBLE DENOUEMENT- AT LEAST FROM ISRAEL'S POINT OF VIEW - OF THIS UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR. PUBLIC OPINION, HOWEVER, MAY BLOCK SUCH AN OUTCOME, PARTICULARLY IF IT REMAINS INFLAMED FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME AND IS CHanneled INTO SUCH AVENUES AS DEMONSTRATIONS AND BOYCOTTS.

7. ALL IN ALL, IT HAS NOT BEEN A GOOD WEEK FOR FRANCO-ISRAELI RELATIONS - IN FACT PROBABLY THE WORST SINCE DE GAULLE CUT OFF THE SUPPLY OF MIRAGES TEN YEARS AGO. THE ELATION HERE WITH WHICH THE WEEK BEGAN AT THE NEWS OF ABOU DAOUD'S DETENTION QUICKLY CHANGED TO BITTERNESS AND DISGUST AT THE NEWS OF HIS SPEEDY RELEASE. FRANCE'S

PROCLAIMED "EVEN-HANDED" POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST SEEMED
MORE TARNISHED THAN EVER AT WEEK'S END.
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Message Attributes

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Status: NATIVE
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TAGS: PFOR, FR, IS, (DAOUD, ABU)
To: STATE
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